



Los Alamos National Laboratory Venture Acceleration Fund boosts three businesses

June 19, 2012



New Mexico firms in health, beauty and agriculture gain support

LOS ALAMOS, New Mexico, June 19, 2012—Three small companies in the diverse fields of medicine, cosmetics and crop irrigation are the latest recipients of Venture Acceleration Fund (VAF) awards from the Los Alamos National Security, LLC. Integrative Enzymatics, Vapour Organic Beauty and HydroBio will receive startup funding from the Laboratory to help them gain traction in their respective markets.

"The VAF program fills a unique need by providing capital that reduces a company's risk," said David Pesiri, the Laboratory's Technology Transfer Division leader.

“VAF is a catalyst for start-ups as well as companies that are ready to scale up and add new jobs. These three award winners demonstrate the diverse ways that VAF helps local companies. The common denominator is the overall benefit to Northern New Mexico,” Pesiri noted.

Treatment for Diabetes Patients

Integrative Enzymatics’ \$70,000 award funds animal studies for a new pharmaceutical to treat Type I diabetes, a disease that affects 17 million people worldwide. Proof of efficacy in animals is a critical component to designate the pharmaceutical as an investigational new drug, obtain US Food and Drug Administration approval and eventually reach the market. Unlike standard insulin, the new drug has the potential to slow the progression of Type I diabetes and secondary complications such as kidney disease, osteoporosis, and cardiovascular, nerve and eye damage.

Integrative Enzymatics was founded in 2011 by a group of Johns Hopkins University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology graduates. Its three founders--Madhavi Gavini, Nicholas Generous and Raja Srinivas--will partner with Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute of Albuquerque on the project.

“Given the youth and backgrounds of our staff, Integrative Enzymatics is indebted to LANL, Northern New Mexico Connect, the local high-tech start-up community and the Santa Fe Business Incubator where we are based. All of these entities have been paramount to our success,” says Generous, who is also a LANL graduate research assistant.

Taos-based Beauty Products

Vapour Organic Beauty of Taos received \$50,000 in funding to meet registration requirements in the European Union (EU) as a first step in expanding distribution to international markets. EU registration will enable the company to sell its luxury organic cosmetics to retailers located in EU countries.

Vapour launched operations in 2009. With 49 percent first-quarter sales growth between 2010 and 2011, the company is poised to scale up, expand global sales and add new jobs to the Taos economy. In the past, Vapour has also received technical assistance from LANL as part of the New Mexico Small Business Assistance program, which developed a unique piece of machinery for the company.

“Vapour Organic Beauty is a brand that embraces the beauty, artistry and values of Northern New Mexico,” says Krysia Boinis, CEO. “We are proud to use VAF funding to share our values with the world.”

Agricultural Irrigation Improvements

HydroBio of Santa Fe received a \$75,000 award to commercialize irrigation control technology called TIMTM or Targeted Irrigation Management. The funding will support additional programming and testing of computer algorithms, calibration of algorithms for specific crops, an online web interface and market development.

Testing and demonstration will occur on center-pivot irrigation systems in Colorado’s San Luis Valley, the Texas Panhandle, south central Nebraska and the Pacific Northwest. HydroBio has worked with agricultural partners in these regions over the past year on research and development to expedite the savings of millions of acre-feet of water and billions of dollars in energy costs.

Propelled by VAF, company president Dr. David Groeneveld and vice president Bridget Adams plan to evolve HydroBio from a consulting business into a scalable

commercial venture by focusing on water-conservation technology—an industry niche with significant growth potential and global importance.

“Timing of the VAF award is perfect to support this summer’s beta tests,” says Dr. Groeneveld. “TIM™ has the potential to optimize water usage globally and this generous award expedites this critically important mission.”

Los Alamos National Security, LLC, manager of Los Alamos National Laboratory, invests \$1 million per year in economic development through a program known as Northern New Mexico Connect.

Northern New Mexico Connect promotes VAF and a variety of other business development programs. These efforts have generated a \$31.7 million return in the regional economy on a \$5 million LANS investment and helped create or retain 240 high-paying jobs.

Los Alamos National Laboratory

www.lanl.gov

(505) 667-7000

Los Alamos, NM

Operated by Los Alamos National Security, LLC for the Department of Energy's NNSA

